

Your Pregnancy!



Hello! Today we will be talking about some pregnancy basics. This lesson will be divided into six short sections:

1. Weight Gain
2. Healthy Eating
3. Taking Your Vitamins
4. Things to Avoid
5. Food Safety
6. Feeding Your Baby

Let's begin!

Weight Gain

You probably know that you will need to gain weight while you are pregnant. Some of your questions might be: Why do I need to gain weight? How much is enough? Who can tell me what I need to know?

The weight you need to gain depends on how much you weighed before you became pregnant. Your doctor or midwife can help you know what is right for you. You need to gain enough weight, but you don't want to gain too much.

Regular activity can help you to stay fit during pregnancy and may help you to cope with the pain of labor! Walking, swimming, and low impact aerobics are great choices. Before you begin or continue your exercise program, talk to your doctor.

Healthy Eating

There isn't a magic food plan for you to stick to while you are pregnant! Remember the basics! The Food Guide Pyramid is a great guide for healthy eating. Younger women might need an extra serving from the dairy group. Everyone likes sweets, but eating too frequently from the top of the Food Guide Pyramid will get in the way of other healthier foods. What are some ways to have a sweet but healthy treat?

- Have a glass of chocolate milk or some pudding (made with low-fat milk).
- Make trail mix (peanuts, raisins, chocolate chips). Put them in ½ cup serving sizes (put them in a baggie) to avoid overeating.

- Cut up fresh fruit into popsicle-sized pieces. Insert a popsicle stick. Place on a cookie sheet and freeze. After they are frozen, place in a large freezer-safe bag and enjoy!

If you were a healthy weight before pregnancy, you only need 300 extra calories a day starting in your 4th month. Here are some examples of 300 calories:

- 1 cup of non-fat fruit yogurt and a medium apple
- 1 piece of whole wheat bread with 2 Tbsp of peanut butter
- ½ cup of raisin bran cereal with ½ cup of non-fat milk and a small banana

Taking Your Vitamins



Always follow your doctor's advice when it comes to your prenatal vitamins. Not on one yet? Talk to your doctor. When you are pregnant, your body needs more iron to keep your blood healthy. Your prenatal vitamin is one way you can get the iron you need.

Have you heard about folic acid? Eating foods with folic acid can help your baby's spine and brain to form properly. Your WIC cereal, juice, and beans are great sources of folic acid!

The March of Dimes website can help you learn about folic acid too. The address is www.marchofdimes.com. Search under folic acid.

Many women are interested in taking herbs for one reason or another. Many herbs have not been studied enough...so we don't know if they are really safe. It is a good idea to talk to your doctor if you are taking herbs, or if you want to take herbs.

Things to Avoid

1. Alcohol. Why? Alcohol can increase your baby's risk of mental retardation, learning problems and major birth defects.
2. Smoking. Why? The risks are your baby could be born too early (prematurity) or born not weighing enough (low birth weight). Your baby could also be born addicted to the nicotine in the cigarettes. Stay away from second hand smoke, too! It is also bad for you and the baby!
3. Drugs. Why? Drugs can cause your baby to not grow well, cause low birth weight, and may even cause your baby to die.



Food Safety

Listeria is a food born illness that can make you and your baby very sick. To avoid Listeria, make sure you cook your meat very well and cook left-overs and ready-to-eat foods (hot dogs, lunch meat) until they are steaming hot. Also avoid soft cheeses like Brie, Feta, Blue, and Camembert to avoid Listeria.

Fish such as shark, swordfish, king mackerel, and tilefish have higher mercury levels. Too much mercury can be harmful to you and your baby. Avoid these fish while you are pregnant. You may safely eat 12 ounces of other cooked fish (like canned light tuna, salmon, and shrimp) per week.

How will you feed your baby?

It is a good idea to think about that now! Breastfeeding can be one of your happiest relationships! Breastfeeding can comfort your baby and it is always the right temperature and ready to go! No messy preparation! Breastfeeding provides a normal start to life and is the normal follow-up to birth for the mother's body. Breastfeeding lets the baby control his own appetite. There are people at your WIC clinic that can help you with breastfeeding. Don't be afraid to ask them questions!

Now, please answer the questions at the end of this lesson.



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